

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-6, 8-16 and 18-20 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 16, 18 and 19 are amended; and Claims 2, 7 and 17 are canceled by the present amendment. Claims 1, 6 and 16 are amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable Claims 2, 7 and 17, respectively. Claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 18 and 19 are amended to change dependency only. Thus, no new matter is presented.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claim 6 and the title were objected to; Claims 1, 5, 6, 13, 15, and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Bakx et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,471,457); Claims 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Bakx et al. in view of background material; and Claims 2-4, 7-11 and 17-20 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As an initial matter, the title is amended to be clearly indicative of the claimed invention, and Claim 6 is amended to incorporate the language recommended in the outstanding Official Action. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objections to Claim 6 and the title be withdrawn.

Applicant appreciatively acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter. In order to expedite prosecution of this application, Claims 1, 6 and 16 are amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable Claims 2, 7 and 17, respectively. Therefore, amended independent Claims 1, 6 and 16, are now believed to be allowable over the applied

references, and Applicant respectfully requests that the outstanding rejection to these claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), be withdrawn. Further as rejected Claims 5 and 12-15 depend from amended independent Claims 1 and 6, respectively, Applicants also request that the outstanding rejections to these claims be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present Application, including Claims 1, 3-6, 8-16 and 18-20, is patently distinguished over the applied references, in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at an early date.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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